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18 March 2016

Mrs Adele Deasy  
Acting Headteacher  
Fareham Academy  
St Anne's Grove  
Fareham  
Hampshire  
PO14 1JJ

Dear Mrs Deasy,

### **Short inspection of Fareham Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 23 February 2016, with Fred Valletta, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in May 2012.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection. Since your appointment as acting headteacher in September 2015, you have purposefully set about fostering a culture in which the school's strengths and weaknesses are openly and honestly reviewed. As a result you, other senior leaders and the governors have an accurate and well-documented picture of what the school does well and what it needs to improve.

Staff share your conviction that every pupil is important, from the day they join the school until they leave at the end of Year 11. You have ensured that pupils' pastoral and welfare needs are given careful support, alongside their academic requirements. As a consequence, pupils feel that staff care for them and understand their needs.

Under your leadership, staff are equally well supported. They are encouraged to collaborate to improve their teaching and, consequently, staff share ideas and help each other, which has resulted in a buoyant workforce with high morale. It is clear that everyone shares the responsibility of ensuring pupils make strong progress, both academically and personally. The quality of teaching remains good and pupils achieve well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and, particularly, science. When the predecessor school

was inspected, science was judged to be in need of improvement, and this has been achieved.

You have taken firm action to address areas of underperformance in the 2015 GCSE results. Weaknesses in the leadership of French and humanities have been tackled and these departments have been supported by external and internal mentors. Staffing is now more secure. The gaps for disadvantaged pupils were too wide. You are clear that this is a priority and have addressed the situation quickly. You have put in place good strategies to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils.

Permanent exclusions from the school had been above national averages. You have developed on-site provision to prevent pupils from being excluded, by improving their behaviour and attitudes to learning. This facility, known as 'SPACE', was newly opened at the time of the inspection, and it is too soon to judge the difference it is making. However, your careful planning has been underpinned by a deep knowledge of the requirements of pupils at risk of exclusion. You have also provided high-quality support and dedicated staff.

In general, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are keen to learn and promptly follow the instructions they are given. However, there are occasional lapses in focus and attention, which some teachers do not always quickly address. Learning is not disrupted, but sometimes, because of this, some pupils are not making the progress they could.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

School leaders have ensured that safeguarding procedures are detailed and of a high quality. All staff and governors receive regular safeguarding training and are aware of the need to be mindful of the necessity to protect pupils from the risk of radicalisation.

The school has clear procedures for minimising risks to pupils and protecting those who are identified as vulnerable. Through the planned curriculum, pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Responses to the pupil questionnaire confirm that pupils feel safe and know that the school's student support staff are always available for them to share any concerns.

The school site is secure and well-maintained. Pupils are well supervised at break and lunch times.

### **Inspection findings**

- A culture of high expectations ensures that pupils and teachers alike aspire to achieve their best. Teachers want to improve their own skills in the classroom and very effectively share with each other what is working well. Teachers sign up for the '6 secure steps' programme, which encourages staff to consider how best to help pupils improve.

- Whether working individually or collaboratively, pupils show a strong sense of trust and mutual respect. For example, pupils regularly give each other helpful feedback on their work. Teachers give written feedback regularly in line with the school's policy. However, teachers do not always make sure their feedback is acted on swiftly and, as a consequence, some pupils miss opportunities to improve their understanding and knowledge.
- Leaders acknowledge that disadvantaged pupils did not do as well as their peers in their GCSE examinations in 2015. Leaders have taken action to ensure that all staff are well-informed about strategies to support this group. An emphasis on careful lesson preparation is making certain the needs of these pupils are being met well. In some subjects in Key Stage 4, such as textiles, disadvantaged pupils are now outperforming their peers. The school's own evidence suggests that, in Key Stage 3, the gaps for disadvantaged pupils are closing rapidly. While there is still a gap in Year 11, it is narrowing and leaders have maintained this as a high priority for all staff.
- Governors are a committed and knowledgeable group who provide support and challenge to senior leaders. They share your ambitions for the school and bring a range of appropriate skills to the role. They have received useful training to help them hold you to account for pupils' progress. Governors regularly check that the information they have been given matches what they experience when they visit the school. They attend school events regularly and meet with parents to ascertain their views.
- From observations of learning and reviewing work in pupils' books, it is clear that no group is left behind with their learning. Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants, who work closely with teachers, to develop pupils' learning. Hearing-impaired pupils are well integrated into lessons because teaching assistants are knowledgeable about how best to support them.
- Teachers consistently apply the school's policy of 'secure, develop and challenge' to encourage pupils to choose their own level of work. In general, this works well for most classes. Teachers select appropriate tasks and resources to help pupils learn. However, at times, this approach does not offer enough flexibility and some pupils do not get the support they need while others do not always get work that is demanding enough.
- Middle leaders collaborate well and support each other effectively. Senior leaders monitor their work and hold them to account through regular meetings, but they exercise autonomy in their areas of responsibility. They are very clear that they are responsible for ensuring their teams are relentlessly focused on improving outcomes for all pupils. As leaders, they regularly share their ideas to promote this key aim. Nonetheless, the middle leaders are a relatively inexperienced group who will require support from senior leaders to monitor the impact of their work.

- Pupils are proud to attend the school. A student leadership scheme acknowledges pupils' contributions to the life of the school, for example for charity fundraising. They wear their leadership badges with pride.
- Pupils are involved in decision-making at the school through their school council. Recently, elections were held to choose head boy and girl, with all pupils taking part in the voting process, developing their understanding of British values. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to widen their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. For example, pupils took responsibility for preparing and leading a whole-school assembly for Remembrance Day.
- Leaders assiduously encourage the promotion of literacy. Key technical words are highlighted in lessons and the corridors display terminology for each subject area. Pupils with low levels of literacy on entry to the school are supported through specific programmes and, by the end of Year 7, almost all have caught up. Pupils' oracy skills are developed effectively. For example, pupils regularly enter the 'Youth Speaks' competition, and in a physical education lesson careful attention was paid to developing accurate explanations about the actions pupils were taking to develop their skills in football.
- The school has detailed information about pupils' attendance, which is tracked and analysed thoroughly. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and now is in line with national averages. While leaders have taken actions to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, it is still too low. Leaders know these individual pupils very well and should now use this information to help them personalise an approach to tackle the stubbornly low attendance for this group of pupils.
- Pupils' conduct themselves well around the site. They are polite, friendly and regulate themselves well along corridors and in the canteen at lunch and break times. The site is free from litter and graffiti.
- Pupils told inspectors they feel safe at the school and parents confirmed this view. Bullying was thought to be rare and pupils were confident that it was swiftly dealt with by staff if it did occur. Pupils are very appreciative of the work of the student support team in providing pastoral guidance and help.
- You have taken steps to make the school more welcoming and accessible to parents, so that they are more involved in the learning of their children. This is appreciated by parents, who told inspectors they are now much better informed, as the school is using a wider range of methods to communicate, such as social media. In addition, you have forged more direct links with neighbouring schools and are working more closely with the local community.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the attendance of disadvantaged pupils improves and matches that of other pupils in the school
- pupil premium funding is carefully targeted to the needs of individuals
- middle leaders are given continued support to drive up outcomes for all pupils.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner, and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helena Read  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors visited nine lessons in the school, and looked at learning jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and looked at some of their work. Inspectors met with pupils both formally and informally. Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders and members of the governing body. Responses from members of staff and pupils to their confidential online questionnaires were considered. Careful account was taken of 54 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the written comments made by parents. Inspectors looked at documents, including the school's self-evaluation, information about performance management and the quality of teaching, information about pupils' learning and progress and minutes of meetings.